

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed June 27, 2005, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner enter the above amendments and consider the following remarks. Unless expressly stated otherwise, the amendments and remarks made herein are irrelevant to any claims that the Examiner has previously indicated contain allowable subject matter.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate allowable subject matter, and claims 9 and 19 have been amended to correct informalities. In addition, new claims 22-32 have been added. Claims 3, 10-18, 20, and 21 have been canceled. As a result, claims 1, 2, 4-9, 19, and 22-32 are pending in the application. The Applicant respectfully requests further examination and reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments and accompanying remarks.

Species Restriction

The Applicant hereby affirms the election of group 1, figures 2, 3, and 5d (i.e., claims 1, 2, 4-9, 15-19, and 21). The Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 as well as new independent claims 22 and 28 are not limited to the specific gasket configurations shown in figures 2, 3, and 5d. For example, the present application shows and/or describes some other examples of gaskets that may be covered by the claims.

Non-Elected Invention

Claims 3, 10-14, and 20 were previously withdrawn by the Examiner. In order to enable the addition of new claims without incurring additional fees, claims 3, 10-14, and 20 have been canceled.

Rejection of Claims 1, 4-7, 15, and 21 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 4-7, 15, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sims. The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 16. As a result of the amendment of claim 1, claim 15 has been canceled without prejudice. Moreover, claim 21 has been canceled without prejudice in order to take advantage of the allowable subject matter of claim 16. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits that Sims cannot support the rejection of claims 1 and 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Rejection of Claims 1, 4-9, and 21 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 4-9, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Rabas. The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 16, and claim 21 has been canceled without prejudice in order to take advantage of the allowable subject matter of claim 16. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits that Rabas cannot support the rejection of claims 1 and 4-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

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Rejection of Claim 2 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Rabas in view of Hamer. The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 16. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits that Rabas in view of Hamer cannot support the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicant appreciates the Examiner's recognition that claims 16-19 contain allowable subject matter. Accordingly, the Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 16. In addition, claims 17 and 18 have been rewritten as new independent claims 22 and 28, respectively. In light of the aforementioned amendments, claims 16-18 have been canceled without prejudice, and claim 19 has been amended to depend from new independent claim 28. The Applicant respectfully submits that no fees are due for the new claims.

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Conclusion

The Applicant has amended the claims to take advantage of the allowable subject matter. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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